

Linton CE Infant School

First Steps into School



Linton CE Infant School: where happiness and achievement go hand in hand

At Linton Infants we provide an environment where children and all school members can be happy, healthy, safe and achieve their full social and intellectual potential.

We do this by:

- creating happy, stimulating and exciting opportunities for learning
- developing positive relationships based on respect of self and others
- supporting a creative approach to personal development and growth
- providing a caring, Christian environment

We work in partnership with parents and our community to fully equip children for their future and have lots of different ways in which you can get involved with your children's learning.



First Steps into School...

Helping your child get ready for school

Partners in Learning

Your child will have already started on their life-long learning journey well before starting school. They will bring with them a diverse wealth of knowledge, experience and understanding. Children learn best in an environment where they feel enabled, safe and cared for. To help us achieve this we feel that developing a positive relationship between home and school right from the very start is vital. Good education is dependent upon a working partnership between home and school. We hope that through your child's time with us you will find this relationship supportive and that we can all learn together. We will also offer opportunities for you to come into school to find out more about how we teach key curriculum areas through partnership workshops. Parents to keep up to date with what we are doing in the classroom through an online app called Class Dojo.

What is Reception Class?

Your child will be entering school in their Reception Year. This is the final year of the Early Years Foundation Stage. During this year your child will continue to follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum that your child will have experienced in pre-school settings. Learning will continue in areas to support their;

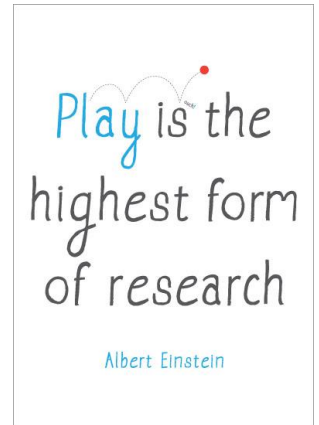
- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Literacy
- Maths
- Understanding of the world
- Expressive arts and design

We aim to provide a safe physical and emotional environment in which children are prepared to take risks in their learning, explore their thinking and explain. "Why?" and "How?" are powerful questions!

Helping children at home by supporting them in their play, talk and investigation increases a child's thinking and reasoning skills, encourages sustained concentration and nurtures independence. Children who are supported throughout their time with us in this way from the very start are then well equipped to benefit from the education they receive in school.

Play

Play is an essential part of children's development and learning. Through play children explore and develop their own ways of working, learning, exploring and finding out about the world around them. Through play children learn their social skills and build relationships with others, they learn to manage disagreements and conflict and learn to resolve these. Play gives children a chance to develop a positive attitude towards learning, and equips them with the social and emotional skills needed to work within a group. The following are some suggestions of practical activities which you might like to try together at home. An essential part of these activities is not the end product or what you are doing, but the time you spend talking, discussing and finding out. This will help their language and thought processes to flourish- essential to becoming an effective learner. All curriculum areas can be developed through play and at Linton Infants we dedicate a large part of the day to enabling children to learn through their own initiated play.



Sensory Play

Opportunities for children to explore and investigate using all their senses and develop motor skills are relatively easy to provide at home.

Water Play

Can happen in any size of container. Bowls, jugs, funnels, dolls, boats, tube all provide a great basis for exploring capacity and co-ordination.

Sand

Wet or dry, play sand provides great pleasure, partly for its tactile nature and partly for the way it can be tipped, poured, moulded, brushed and mixed. A sand tray can be a great backdrop for small world creative play with animals, dinosaurs, cars. As an alternative to sand, try leaves, bark chips, oats or even glitter.

Dough and Plasticene

Great for imaginative play, role play, maths and developing hand and finger muscles. Dough can easily be made at home with your child. Use cutters, rollers, shells or even construction bricks to make different shapes or impressions.

1 cup salt

3 cups flour

½ cup cream of tartare (help stop it getting too sticky)

Water to bind

Colour, essences, glitter or spices all provide an optional extra



The great outdoors



The outdoors provides one of the greatest learning environments and at school we place huge importance in being able to use the outdoors at every opportunity.

Digging in the garden using child-sized tools will help develop muscles and can foster an interest in garden wildlife and growing.

Play equipment to develop a sense of adventure also build muscles and balancing skills helping keep your child healthy and active. At school we look to enable

children who display confidence in moving under, over and around equipment with strength and safety. Physical play doesn't have to be a climbing frame. Crates, cardboard boxes, planks and old sheets provide great opportunity for den, castle or rocket making.

Bike, trikes and scooters helps children develop their big muscle groups and learn about balance.

Physical play is essential to develop the muscles needed for co-ordinated movement which eventually will greatly support control in drawing and writing.

Getting creative

Drawing, painting, using chalks and crayons are all great practice for mark-making skills. Encourage children to create their own art work or draw alongside them rather solely colouring in pre-drawn pictures. It is common for children at this age to still be undecided



about which hand is dominant. Allow your child to choose whichever is more comfortable and help them form an efficient grip.

Junk modelling helps children problem solve on many levels, from making choices about what to use, to using tools to cut, stick and decorate. It helps children develop physical and creative skills. Encourage

children to hold child's scissors correctly and if they are right handed cut around things anti-clock wise (clock wise if they are left handed). If you are able to supervise closely then woodworking is also great for developing strength and co-ordination.

Construction toys (lego, duplo, building blocks, K'nex) offer a great and endless opportunity to play and create together with lots of maths and problem solving thrown in. Talk about what is being created, whether it works or what could be swapped around.



Dressing up and story telling

Role play is a great way to practise and rehearse everyday situations and develops new language. Dressing up with old shoes, bags, glasses, material for capes, old t-shirts lets children's imagination run riot, especially if they are able to do this with friends or a willing adult.

We really value oral story telling at Linton Infants, and retelling and acting out stories supports children in both reading and writing.



Supporting Communication, Language and Literacy

Before a child can read or write, they must learn to speak and listen. Every child needs words with which to think and express their thoughts. The ability to express needs and have a large bank of vocabulary to fall back on is essential. Engaging in conversation, talking about everyday things, chatter and asking and answering queries are all valuable. At school we plan specific talking times when as a class or in small groups we might discuss different questions which have no right answer, for example 'would you rather be invisible or be able to fly?'

Phonics

English in its written form relies on the ability to master code-cracking. Understanding how written squiggles and lines are used in over 120 combinations to represent over 42 different sounds is a tricky process! At school we use a progressive system to teach children apply phonics in both reading and writing. Throughout your child's time with us, we will let you know how you can continue to support you child at home with this, especially through reading homework.

At the risk of too much jargon, two terms we will use repeatedly are phoneme and grapheme. A phoneme is the individual unit of sound that can be heard in a word i.e. /c//a//t/, /sh//ee//p/.

Grapheme means the symbol (letters) we use to represent a sound in writing. ie //igh/.

Where to start?

However complex it all sounds, children pick this up quickly and a few simple steps can make all the difference. At home you can support this by helping your child to listen and discriminate between different types of sounds around you, helping them tune into sound. Listen out for and describe the sounds you can hear in the environment around you. Go for Listening Walks, listen to story CD's or different types of music together. Have quiet times too, without any background noise, so you can hear each other talking.

If your child is interested talk about the initial sounds (NOT the letter names at this stage) that things begin with as part of day-to-day activities. i.e. Let's put on our sssss-ocks. Many children are keen to look out and identify the letters of their own name and family names. Singing nursery rhymes and chants helps develop awareness of rhyme, pattern and alliteration.

Reading

Reading is an important part of our culture and brings us together. Sharing picture books is a great way to do this, especially if you can find a quiet and relaxed time to spend together. Let your child sit close with you. As you read look at the covers as well as the pages. Talk about the illustrations and where the writing bit is. Allow time to talk about what is happening in the story and any experiences that you might have shared that are similar to what is happening in the story. Point to the writing as you read, explain what the different bits of writing say. All this helps children understand that print carries meaning and that grown-ups are not always making it up!

Re-reading the same books over and over may not be our first choice as adults but it is an important part of the learning process. Your child may like to “read” stories back to you, picking up on repeating language or interesting words. Developing enjoyment and enthusiasm are essential pre-requisites. Visiting the library is a great source of books or swap with friends.



Reading comes in many different forms, look out for environmental print: street signs, labels in supermarkets, zoo, museums, child friendly websites, children's comics and magazines, annuals, posters, stickers, information and fact books with great photographs are amazing too.

Writing

Writing comes as different skills combine. Speaking is essential along with understanding how words are built from phonemes (units of sound) and how this in turn can be written down (graphemes). Physical development is also a key player. Through reading and watching you write, children will begin to understand the purpose of writing.

At home give your child plenty of opportunity to mark make using pencils, pens, chalks etc. Holding a writing tool is a fiddly business, so any practise is valuable. Children often want to learn how to write their own names. We would encourage them to start the name with a capital and then use individual (not joined) letters in lower case for the rest.

Remember that emergent writing comes in many forms too:

- Shopping lists
- Party invitations
- Captions and words for pictures
- Copying labels, letters and images from those that they see in the world around them if they chose

Supporting Mathematical Development

Maths is everywhere every day. It is a great skill and at school is taught in a practical, interactive way.

Songs and rhymes are a great way to help children learn number names and explore the first concepts of counting, addition and subtraction. You might like to try:

- Five little men in flying saucer
- 1,2,3,4,5 Once I caught a fish alive
- Five currant buns in a bakers' shop
- One elephant went out to play.

Counting everyday objects saying one number name for each item is also a skill that can be practised easily for example when tidying up, shopping, baking or laying the table. Ordering, matching and sorting things help children look for similarities and differences and make comparisons in colour, size and shape. Many stories offer strong links with mathematical language and ideas, such as *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*; *Dinosaur Big, Dinosaur Small*; *Rosie's Walk* or *Who sank the Boat?*

Becoming independent

Self-care

Our toilets are all child-sized at school and Foundation Stage has its own modern toilet stalls and wash basin area. (Children will also have access to main toilets, please note that for boys this will include urinals).

- Use the toilet independently (including flushing and managing personal hygiene!)
- be confident in asking if they need to go use the toilet or need help
- know how to wash hands using soap and how to dry them

Eating and drinking

- recognise and use own water bottles
- using grown up size cutlery, including using knives to cut and spread and feed self
- pouring water into a cup

Clothing

- Recognising own name tags on coat, clothing, book bag and PE kit
- Recognising own shoes and wellies and being able to put them on and do them up
- Recognising own PE kit items, and PE bag
- Being able to manage gloves, scarves, sunhats, sun lotion
- Being able to organise self to change into and out of PE kit (shorts and T-shirt, track suit and trainers) and school uniform (tights, buttons on polo shirts, and turning clothes back round the right way).

Customising Book Bags and PE bags at home really helps you child spot their possessions amongst many others.

